Details of eligible BPL families to be covered, methodology for their identification, issue of targeted identification cards to them, etc. under the proposed National Food Security Act, are yet to be worked out. Examination of different aspects of the proposed law in consultation with various stakeholders is presently in progress.

More items to be sold through PDS

2300. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has made any assessment of the prices of essential pulses and foodgrains in the open market and under Government run Public Distribution System in the last one year;

(b) whether more items would be allowed to sell through the PDS; and

(c) if so, the details and price list thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A statement indicating additional commodities being distributed through PDS outlets other than Wheat, Rice, Coarse grains, sugar, Kerosene oil (as reported by respective State/UTs) is enclosed as Statement. [Refer to the Statement appended to the Answer to Unstarred Question No. 2298 Part (c) and (d)]

Rise in price of pulses

†2301. SHRI BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI:
SHRI PRABHAT JHA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that despite unprecedented decline in inflation, the price of pulses are at the highest as it may be mentioned that pulses is the basic food for the poor people of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for the failure of Government in controlling the price of pulses; and

(d) the steps Government is going to take to bring down the price of pulses immediately?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Government is aware of the rise in prices of pulses. The prices of pulses (except chana) have registered an increase over the past one year. The wholesale price Index Inflation of pulses as on 4.7.2009 was Arhar : (38.15%), urad : (21.69%), Gram : (-4.99%), Moong : (30.56%), Masoor : (10.51%) respectively.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) Domestic prices of pulses have risen mainly on account of decline in production of pulses. As per 4th Advance Estimates, the domestic production of pulses has declined to 14.66 million tonnes during 2008-09 as compared to 14.76 million tonnes during 2007-08 (Final Estimates) leading to a supply demand mismatch. In addition, hardening of international prices affected imports of pulses and total domestic availability.

(d) Government measure to bring down the prices of pulses are given in the Statement.

Statement

GOVERNMENT MEASURES

A. Ban on export/duty reduction on import/Import by PSUs

- Extended zero duty on import of pulses for another one year, up to 31.3.2010.
- Extended the ban on export of pulses (except kabuli chana) for another one year, up to 31.3.2010.
- Extended the current dispensation for PSUs to import pulses against reimbursement up to 15% of losses and service charge of 1.2% of CIF value for another year, up to 31.3.2010.

B. Supply of pulses through PDS

- Extended the scheme for distribution of imported pulses through PDS for six months, up to 30.9.2009.

C. On Stock Limits

- Removal of restrictions on licensing, stock limits and movement of pulses be kept in abeyance for a period upto 30th September, 2009 *w.e.f.* 02.04.2009.

BPL families in the country

†2302. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of families living below the poverty line in the country;

(b) whether the proposed National Food Security Act is faced with difficulties in implementation;

(c) if so, the details of those difficulties; and

(d) the action plan to keep National Food Security Scheme corruption-free and ensure benefit thereunder to all the families living below the poverty line?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) For allocation of foodgrains to States and UTs under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), the Department of Food and Public Distribution uses the number of Below Poverty Line (BPL) families based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.